

# behavioral sciences

Gathered at the meeting of the American Political Science Association last week in Los Angeles

## CONVENTIONS

### Ideology and the bandwagon

Analyzing the process by which political conventions choose candidates has been a difficult problem for political scientists. Many theorists have considered that a candidate's chance of winning the nomination is the major factor in determining support—the larger the coalition that supports him the likelier it is that other state delegations will hop on the bandwagon.

This approach obviously leaves out the question of the ideological position of the uncommitted state delegations. Drs. James P. Zais of the State University of New York at Buffalo and John H. Kessel of Ohio State University theorize that the ideological distance between a state delegation and a coalition is equally as important as the size of the coalition.

To test their theory, they made a computer simulation of the 1968 Republican Convention, in which Richard Nixon beat back challenges on the left and right by Nelson Rockefeller and Ronald Reagan. They measured the ideological position of state delegations on the basis of their own judgment and that of two other professors familiar with Republican politics.

The outcome was encouraging: The computer predicted that Nixon would win by a fairly narrow margin, and that his strongest challenge would come from the rightist, Reagan. This, they say, was essentially what happened in 1968.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Standardizing data

A growing pool of biographical data is becoming available to a large number of researchers. But those who collect data rarely consider the possibility that someone else would want to use the information. The result is that data from one source cannot be coordinated with that from other sources.

A modest degree of coordination, says Dr. David Nasatir of the University of California at Berkeley, will yield a great deal of mutual benefit in the collection of biographical materials. He and his colleagues have developed a standardized data gathering system called Berkeley Elites Automated Retrieval, which makes such coordination possible, he says.

## EDUCATION

### Textbooks and the Presidency

A prominent physicist once said that "textbooks are always wrong," meaning that they are usually several years behind the frontier of current thought. A case in point, says Dr. Thomas E. Cronin of the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., is the picture of the Presidency in elementary political science textbooks.

Examination of 30 elementary texts on American Government and the Presidency shows a broad pattern of support for the concept of the strong, active, all-powerful President, reports Dr. Cronin.

That picture, he says, grew partly out of the image of Franklin D. Roosevelt as the man who single-handedly drew the nation out of the depression.

Not only is the picture wrong, says Dr. Cronin; it also is unfortunate because it leads young people to expect too much of the President, indoctrinating them with the idea that the man in White House can solve all the nation's problems.

A current flood of criticism of the concept of the textbook Presidency, largely stimulated by President Johnson's celebrated inability to control the Vietnam War, will probably not be absorbed in textbooks for several years, Dr. Cronin says.

## RACE AND POLITICS

### Judging policemen

There is a substantial gap between how black ghetto dwellers think policemen should act and how they do act, according to research by Dr. Herbert Jacob of Northwestern University. But white middle- and working-class respondents showed a similar sense of injustice as reflected by a gap between the ideal and the real policeman, he says.

Dr. Jacob asked 224 citizens of three Milwaukee neighborhoods to rate policemen on a number of points. They were also asked how they expected policemen to rate on those points.

He found that blacks generally rated policemen lower than whites. He also found that the perception of injustice was greater in the ghetto than in the white neighborhoods.

But among ghetto dwellers almost a third found no discrepancy between how they perceived policemen to act and how they thought they should act. That proportion is actually greater than what was found in the middle-class neighborhood, and only slightly less than the percentage of white working-class respondents who found no gap between expectation and performance.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### U.S. scientists in Russia

For some years an exchange program has brought Russian academicians to the United States and sent American scientists to the U.S.S.R. Dr. Frederick Barghoorn of Yale University sent questionnaires in 1966 and 1967 to scholarly visitors to Russia, and received 179 voluminous replies.

The survey indicates that the exchanges have been valuable in a professional sense, but that work in Russia is frustrating and annoyingly controlled by government overseers—particularly for social scientists.

Dr. Barghoorn says the responses indicate that the more knowledgeable an exchangee is about a non-political discipline, such as mathematics, the more likely he is to be able to compare notes with his Soviet colleagues. Knowledge of socio-political subjects, on the other hand, is likely to make it more difficult to establish and maintain useful relations with Soviet counterparts.

## Gathered from the American Psychological Association convention last week in Miami

### PERSONALITY

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#### The politics of birth order

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In recent years psychologists have shown great interest in the effects of birth order on personality. Research suggests that the influence of early childhood experiences in primary groups affects future political attitudes and behavior.

To examine such relationships Dr. Louis Stewart of San Francisco State College gathered biographical data on 31 American Presidents.

He reports that in 68 percent of the national elections, the President has been a first or third son. (If Presidents from one-child and one-son families are included, the figure increases to 85 percent.) Furthermore, only once has a son of birth rank greater than three been elected, in spite of the fact that in nearly 50 percent of the elections the Presidents have come from families with four to seven sons.

### PSYCHOTHERAPY

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#### Women and therapists

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In a study of 258 persons (159 women and 99 men) who sought psychotherapy, patients were asked if they preferred male or female therapists. Dr. Phyllis Chesler of the City University of New York reports that patients overwhelmingly chose male therapists. In general they stated that they trust and respect men—as people and as authorities—more than they do women, whom they generally mistrust or fear.

Dr. Chesler says that for the women patients, such feelings are reinforced in therapy because for most women “the psychotherapeutic encounter is just one more instance of an unequal relationship, just one more opportunity to be rewarded for expressing distress and to be ‘helped’ by being (expertly) dominated.” Instead of building up an independent identity and improving their superficial relations with other women, women in therapy are often encouraged to talk more about their relations with males, or lack of them.

Dr. Chesler attributes these findings to the fact that the majority of clinicians are middle-aged married men affiliated with political institutions that subscribe to traditional views of women.

### SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

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#### Hippie and student values

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Recently 21 college students and 21 commune hippies who had dropped out of the academic community from which the students were drawn were asked to rank the values most important to them as guiding principles.

The results, report Herbert Cross, Rainer Doost and James Tracy of the University of Connecticut, show that the hippies value inner harmony, wisdom, world at peace and world of beauty more than the students. The students consider self-respect, family security, a sense of accomplishment and national security more important than do the hippies.

The researchers also report that it is more important to the hippies to be honest and forgiving than it is to the students; to the students it is more important to be responsible, intellectual, capable, logical and ambitious.

Interviews showed that the hippies seemed to be more humanistic and less standard-oriented than the students. The researchers self-consciously note that the hippies were a difficult group to assess because they had fundamental objections to the kinds of categorizations necessary for psychological research.

### OPINION RESEARCH

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#### Violence and veterans

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Violence in American society is today a pressing national concern. In one look at the problem Dr. Leon Rappoport of Kansas State University administered an opinion survey on violence to five groups of persons—120 Vietnam veterans, 92 male college students, 91 female college students, 166 middle-aged males and 183 middle-aged females.

College females showed the lowest tendency toward violence, he says, and middle-aged males showed the highest. The veterans were intermediate to the college students and middle-aged samples. Dr. Rappoport suggests that these results are due to the fact that the middle-aged subjects give especially strong support to punitive forms of violence, such as capital punishment, longer sentences for criminals and drug users and more power to police.

The researcher says that a number of veterans he interviewed were distrustful of the Government and the society it represents, either because no maximum effort is being made to win the war or because they see the war as a futile waste.

### MENTAL HEALTH

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#### Anxieties of college students

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A better understanding by university officials of the anxieties of college students can help in the planning of additional counseling and mental health education services. In one study at the University of Texas, 1,078 students were administered a series of tests and questionnaires concerning the sources and kinds of anxiety they experience.

University psychologist Dr. Jane Vincent reports that the main areas of concern noted by students on a check list of problems were their adjustment to college work, social and recreational activities and personal-psychological relations.

When students were given an opportunity to describe their anxieties in their own words on blank cards the most frequently mentioned concerns were interpersonal relationships with members of the opposite sex, parents, roommates and teachers. Academic problems ranked second and social issues and plans for the future were third. Generally, a high anxiety level surrounding grades and academic achievement was noted by the repeated use of the words “time” and “pressure.”